

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

## Policy on Academic Conduct

The economics profession depends on the maintenance of high professional and ethical standards among its members. Similarly the Department of Economics expects its students to maintain high standards of academic conduct.

The University of Washington has a Student Conduct Code (WAC 478-120) available at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=478-120>

The Department of Economics has a policy on academic misconduct. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, cheating on examinations or other individual projects or assignments, and the theft or alteration of other persons' work for the purpose of gaining academic credit or of enhancing grades.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is one of the most widespread and elusive kinds of cheating and is defined in the Academic Responsibility statement mentioned above as:

1. "Using another writer's words without proper citation."
2. "Using another writer's ideas without proper citation."
3. "Citing your source but reproducing the exact words of a printed source without quotation marks."
4. "Borrowing the structure of another author's phrases or sentences without crediting the author from whom it came."
5. "Borrowing all or part of another student's paper or using someone else's outline to write your own paper."
6. "Using a paper writing "service" or having a friend write the paper for you."

### Examination rules

#### I Exam Absence Policy

1. If you are unable to make it to an exam period ***due to illness or another serious unexpected happening***, do the following:

i. Contact your instructor **the same day** to notify him/her that you are not able to take the exam and why.

ii. If you missed the exam for *health reasons*, you need to show **as soon as possible** to your instructor a valid medical note issued by a medical professional, on the original exam date. There is no flexibility on this matter. The arrangement for making up the missing credits may vary from instructor to instructor (make-up exam etc.).

iii. If there was *some other reason* for missing the exam (car accident, meteor shower etc.) come and see your instructor to explain these reasons – you will need to show proper valid documentation. Not waking up or missing your bus/plane is **not** an acceptable excuse.

2. If you know that you are going to be away ***due to an university related activity*** (e.g. sport, debate), let your instructor know well in advance (preferably in the first week of the quarter) so that arrangements for make up can be made upon presentation of proper valid documentation.

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## II Exam Taking Rules

1. Material allowed during a closed book exam.

i. All books, papers, notebooks etc. must be placed inside your bag (backpack etc.) and the bag must be securely and fully closed. If you do not have a bag, you must place all your material out of your reach (classroom window sill etc.)

Note that individual instructors may have specific policies (open book exams etc.)

ii. Only keep writing tools and **basic calculators** (i.e. simple 4-functions calculators). Graphing calculators or calculators with memories will not be allowed. **Sharing of calculators is not permitted.**

iii. **Cellular phones** must be turned off before entering the class and placed in your closed bag (not in your pocket). You are not allowed to use a cellular phone during an exam. Doing so will result in the termination of your exam time (your exam being taken from you at this point). Likewise **i-pads** or **i-pods** (or similar devices) are not allowed. The use of **personal computers** is not allowed during an exam.

iv. Baseball caps with visors and any kinds of **headgear** hiding your eyes are not permitted.

2. Attendance and special accommodation

i. You are expected **not to leave the room** during the exam except in case of emergency. This includes restroom use; be sure to use the restroom before the beginning of the exam.

ii. If you arrive **late** to an exam, you cannot expect to get extra time after the official end of the exam to make up for the missing time at the beginning.

iii. If you have a **documented disability**, please show your instructor your documentation from the Office of Disability Resources for Students on the first day of class, so that your instructor can make all the necessary arrangements if you wish to take your exam in a separate place.

3. Academic honesty

i. Exams are individual work and **cheating will not be tolerated**. Students must not glance at their neighbors' exams. Students must not change their answers after they have turned their exam in.

ii. Check the **student handbook** for further information about cheating, plagiarism etc. Cheating of any kind may result in expulsion from the university. The Department of Economics will follow university policy in case of academic dishonesty. These rules complement/supplement the university rules, which are spelled out at

<http://www.washington.edu/uaa/advising/help/academichonesty.php>

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of the Department's rules for student conduct and evaluation of student learning. Students accused of academic misconduct will be referred directly to the Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct for disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Conduct Code and, if found guilty, will be subject to sanctions. Sanctions range from a disciplinary warning, to academic probation, to immediate dismissal for the Department and the University, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. Dismissal can be, and has been, applied even for first offenses. Moreover, a grade of zero can be assigned by the instructor for the course.

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## Plagiarism and How to Avoid it<sup>1</sup>

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as taking the ideas, writing, or inventions of another and representing them as your own.

In the literary world attitudes toward plagiarism have changed throughout the centuries (1). Plagiarism is also viewed differently from culture to culture. With the introduction of the internet and the ability to easily "copy and paste" anything from a web page into a student's paper, there appears to be a more relaxed attitude toward plagiarism.

In the academic community, however, plagiarism is "considered a form of intellectual larceny, which has no place in a community of scholars " (2). In other words, plagiarism is dishonest and is regarded with contempt. In the sciences, the code of ethics regarding plagiarism is uncompromising; it is not tolerated. For example, some years ago, a researcher in a famous Ivy League University was forced to resign because of plagiarism and, moreover, his immediate supervisor, who was unaware of the plagiarism, was also forced to resign on the grounds that he should have been aware of and prevented the plagiarism (1,3).

While the consequences of plagiarism are not always that drastic, they are usually damaging. One result of a finding of plagiarism is suspicion. In a recent issue of the New York Times (1), Dr. Elliot Osserman of Columbia University stated, "One goes on a presumption of honesty for the first time. If a given investigator has been suspect in his previous work, then I think it's a whole new ball game. Once suspect, always suspect." This suspicion may follow a person for a lifetime and have a profoundly adverse effect on his or her career.

More subtle cases involve ideas and influence. We are all influenced by others' ideas. Indeed, that is fundamental to the educational process. Regurgitating a mentor's ideas might stem from admiration or respect. But which ideas are our own and which others is the question. What is the boundary between being influenced by a book (or person) and representing the ideas in the book as your own, i.e. plagiarizing? In some case there are no easy answers. There will always be borderline cases where reasonable persons may have different opinions and each case will have to be decided on its own evidence.

### Citing Sources of Ideas for Information

If you cite the source of an idea or a piece of information, you are not representing it as your own and cannot be charged with plagiarism. In a term paper, report, or other work of scholarship (as contrasted with "popular literature"), you should acknowledge the ideas and contributions of others, and you should put quotation marks around anything you quote directly.

To write a term paper some students will attempt to find a relatively obscure article and then rewrite and condense it in their own words. There is nothing unethical about that **if** the source is fully acknowledged. If, however, the source of the ideas is not acknowledged, then the student is being intellectually dishonest, for the faculty expects and assumes that term papers and reports represent the student's own original ideas and work.

If you copy something, even a sentence or phrase from source, enclose it in quotation marks and cite the source. If you are assigned a term paper and the paper is copied entirely from one source, and if you put the whole thing in quotes, you are being honest, though you are unlikely to receive a good grade. If you do not put it in quotes, you would be guilty of plagiarism. If you **rephrase** an idea or

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Dick Parks's and Dept. of Chemical Engineering original note.

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the word of another person, acknowledge it and cite the source. You should be aware that when plagiarizing "the extent of dishonesty is not reduced by the amount of writing which is cast in the student's own words." A student who "repeats ideas without acknowledgement, is plagiarizing." (2)

It is not always obvious when to cite a source of ideas or information. You need not cite sources of information that is common knowledge or the kind of information that are readily available in a dictionary or telephone book, etc. Three general rules may help in deciding when to cite a source;

- 1) Cite sources whenever you think it might be helpful to the reader, i.e., when you think a reader might want additional information or explanation or might be curious about the source of your information;
- 2) Give credit where credit is due, i.e., whenever an idea is not your own;
- 3) When in doubt, cite.

### **Mechanics of Citing References**

The styles used for citing references vary from publication to publication. Most academic journals in economics will send you, upon request, a copy of their style manual that includes instructions for creating footnotes and references. Guides such as A Manual of Style, by the University of Chicago Press or A Manual for Writers by Kate Turabian provide detailed instructions on the preparation of references and citations.

In addition to a section entitled Literature Cited, it is often helpful to have a section entitled Reference or Bibliography. Here the writer can list background material that was not cited directly or that may contain additional information of interest to some readers. All the internet sources must be cited.

#### **Literature Cited**

1. Shaw, Peter, "Plagiary," *American Scholar*, 51 325 (1982).
2. Bond, H. L., Thaddeus Seymour, and J. L. Steward, "Sources, their Use and Acknowledgement," Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH (1980).
3. Broad, William J., "Imbroglia at Yale," *Science*, 210 38-41 and 171-173 (1980).

#### **References**

- Broad, William J., "Would-Be Academician Pirates Papers," *Science*, 208,1438 -1 440 (1 980).
- Carroll, J. A., "Plagiarism: The Unfun Game," *English Journal*, 71,92-94 (September 1982).
- Naumann, Earl, "Plagiarism is Alive and Flourishing in the Classroom" *Chron. Higher Ed.*, XXI, 28 (Nov. 4,1981).
- Pavela, Gary, "Cheating on the Campus: Who's Really to Blame," *Chron. Higher Ed .*, XXI, No. 22, 64 (Feb. 9,1981).

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